

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4188

S E C R E T BANGKOK 23907

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR TH US

SUBJ: MY MEETING WITH POLICE DIRECTOR-GENERAL SISUK; NARCOTICS
ISSUES

SUMMARY: ON NOV 12 I CALLED ON POLICE GENERAL SISUK,
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THAI NATIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT SINCE
OCT 1. ALTHOUGH CALL WAS FOR PURPOSE OF INTRODUCTION,
I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR POLICE PROTECTION AFFORDED MISSION
AND MYSELF, NOTED GOOD COOPERATION WE HAVE HAD ON NARCOTICS
MATTER FROM GENERAL PAHO SARASIN AND EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER
PROSPECT THAT COL. PRAMUAN (JAILED IN 1973 FOR NARCOTICS-
RELATED CORRUPTION) WILL SHORTLY BE RELEASED FROM PRISON.
END SUMMARY.

1. ON NOV 12 I PAID INITIAL CALL ON POLICE GEN. SISUK
MAHINTHARATHEP, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THAI NATIONAL POLICE DEPT.
SINCE OCT 1. CALL WAS ESSENTIALLY FOR PURPOSES OF
INTRODUCTION, BUT I RAISED FOLLOWING SUBSTANTIVE POINTS:

A. APPRECIATION FOR PROTECTION OF MISSION - I EXPRESSED
APPRECIATION FOR CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THAI POLICE IN PRO-
VIDING PROTECTION TO U.S. MISSION IN GENERAL AND TO ME
PERSONALLY. GEN. SISUK REPLIED THAT THIS WAS RESPONSIBILITY
OF THAI POLICE, AND HE MADE CLEAR THAT POLICE WOULD BE PRE-
PARED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PROTECTION DURING MY TRAVELS IN
THAILAND IF WE WOULD PROVIDE THEM WITH ITINERARY.

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B. US/RTG COOPERATION ON NARCOTICS - I NOTED THAT

MISSION WAS VERY MUCH IMPRESSED WITH GOOD WORK BEING DONE BY POLICE NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION CENTER IN EXPANDING ITS ACTIVITY, WHICH HAS LED TO NUMBER OF SEIZURES OF NARCOTICS RECENTLY. BOTH MAJOR GENERAL PHAO SARASIN AND COLONEL CHAWALIT YOTMANI ARE DOING EXCELLENT WORK IN THE CENTER. WE GREATLY VALUE COOPERATION OUR DEA PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED FROM CENTER AND TRUST THIS COOPERATION WILL CONTINUE.

C. POSSIBLE RELEASE OF POLICE COLONEL PRAMUAN - I MENTIONED REPORTS THAT COLONEL PRAMUAN WANIKAPHAN, FORMER CHIEF OF THE POLICE ANTI-NARCOTICS CENTER, WILL BE RELEASED FROM PRISON AFTER SERVING ONLY TWO OF 25-YEAR SENTENCE FOR NARCOTICS RELATED CORRUPTION. I SAID THAT FROM ALL INDICATIONS PRAMUAN WAS CLEARLY GUILTY AS CHARGED, THOUGH HE WAS NOT RPT NOT A NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, AND I EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT HIS RELEASE MIGHT BE READ AS A SIGN RTG IS TAKING RELAXED ATTITUDE TOWARDS NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. SISUK NOTED FIRSTLY THAT MATTER IS NOT RPT NOT IN HANDS OF THAI POLICE BUT IS UNDER JURISDICTION OF DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CORRECTIONS DEPT. OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. COL. CHAWALIT, WHO HAD JOINED US BY THEN, RECALLED THAT PRAMUAN WAS SENTENCED IN 1973 UNDER ARTICLE 17 OF THE FORMER INTERIM CONSTITUTION UNDER THE THANOM GOVERNMENT. HIS RELEASE WAS INTENDED TO CORRECT THE FAILURE TO GIVE HIM FULL PROTECTION OF HIS RIGHTS. SISUK ADDED THAT PRAMUAN HAS EXERCISED HIS RIGHT TO APPEAL TO THE KING FOR RELEASE ON GROUNDS HE WAS NOT GIVEN FAIR TRIAL, AND IT IS LIKELY THAT HE WILL BE RELEASED ON THESE GROUNDS. (COMMENT: DCM RECALLS WHAT WHEN PRAMUAN WAS ARRESTED IN 1973, MAJ. GEN. PHAO COMMENTED THAT, WHILE PRAMUAN WAS UNDOUBTEDLY GUILTY OF TAKING MONEY FROM TRAFFICKERS, CHARGES AGAINST HIM WOULD NOT RPT NOT STAND UP IN COURT. HENCE, PHAO SAID, PRAMUAN WAS BEING ARRESTED AND SENTENCED UNDER SUMMARY PROCEDURES OF ARTICLE 17 OF INTERIM CONSTITUTION. IT SEEMS CLEAR TO ME THAT CASE OF PRAMUAN HAS BEEN QTE TAINTED END QTE FROM BEGINNING BY FAILURE TO ACCORD HIM DUE PROCESS OF LAW. AND UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES HIS RELEASE IS LIKELY. END COMMENT)

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